UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/51/499
15 October 1996
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH/SPANISH

Fifty-first session
Agenda item 107

PROGRAMME OF ACTIVITIES OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECADE OF THE WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Implementation of the programme of activities for the Decade

Report of the Secretary-General

CONTENTS

	Paragraphs	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1 - 29	3
A. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities	10 - 17	4
B. Working Group on Indigenous Populations	18 - 29	5
II. THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE DECADE	30 - 93	7
Activities to be undertaken by the major actors	34 - 93	7
1. United Nations observances	35 - 46	7
(a) International Day of the World's Indigenous People	35 - 42	7
(b) Official observance of the Decade at international conferences	43 - 46	9
2. Activities of the Coordinator and the Centre for Human Rights	47 - 59	9

96-28014 (E) 301096 041196

CONTENTS (continued)

		Paragraphs	Page
	(a) Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People	47 - 52	9
	(b) Fellowship programme	53 - 54	10
	(c) Expert Seminar on Practical Experiences Regarding Indigenous Land Rights and Claims ..	55	11
	(d) Workshop for Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific, on the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People	56 - 59	11
3.	Operational activities of the United Nations system	60 - 70	11
4.	Activities of regional organizations	71 - 74	13
5.	Activities of Member States	75 - 82	13
6.	Activities of organizations of indigenous people .	83 - 85	15
7.	Activities of non-governmental organizations and other interested groups, including education establishments, the media and business	86 - 93	15
III.	FINAL COMMENTS	94 - 106	16

Annexes

I.	Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People - estimated income as at 12 September 1996	20
II.	International Decade of the World's Indigenous People	21
III.	Questionnaire for applicants to the Voluntary Fund	23

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By resolution 48/163, of 21 December 1993 the General Assembly proclaimed the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, commencing on 10 December 1994, the main objective of which is the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education and health.

2. By the same resolution, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to appoint the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights as the Coordinator for the Decade.

3. By resolution 49/214 of 23 December 1994 concerning the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the General Assembly adopted the short-term programme of activities for the Decade for 1995 contained in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General, 1/ and invited the Commission on Human Rights, at its fifty-first session, to consider it.

4. The World Conference on Human Rights, which was held in Vienna, recommended, in its Declaration and Programme of Action, that the General Assembly should proclaim an international decade of the world's indigenous people, beginning in 1994 with action-oriented programmes to be decided upon in partnership with indigenous people. It recommended that a voluntary trust fund should be set up and that consideration should be given to the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system.

5. The Programme of Activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People was adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 50/157 of 21 December 1995. The Assembly adopted a number of recommendations concerning the Decade and decided that the programme of activities should be reviewed and updated throughout the Decade and that at the mid-point of the Decade the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly should review the results of the activities to identify obstacles to the achievement of the goals of the Decade and to recommend solutions for overcoming them.

6. One of the objectives of the International Decade was the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous people, currently under discussion in the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights established pursuant to Commission resolution 1995/32 of 3 March 1995, and the establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people within the United Nations. The purpose of the forum would be to create a permanent arena where indigenous people could raise and discuss matters of interest to them with Governments. Indigenous people could promote peace and prosperity in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

7. The United Nations has carried out a series of activities relating to the rights of indigenous people. They include a study of treaties and agreements and other constructive arrangements between States and indigenous peoples and one on the protection of the heritage of indigenous peoples. In March 1996 an expert seminar on practical experience regarding indigenous land rights and

claims was held in Whitehorse, Canada, at the invitation of the Canadian Government and the Centre for Human Rights. The important topic of the rights of indigenous people was discussed at various high-level conferences, including Habitat II in Istanbul, in June 1996, and the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, in September 1995.

8. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights lays particular emphasis on international cooperation for the solution of the problems faced by indigenous peoples, and attaches priority to promoting and ensuring an ongoing dialogue between Governments and indigenous people. He invites Governments and non-governmental organizations to find better ways of strengthening technical assistance to indigenous people and encouraging their organizations to find and implement solutions to their own problems.

9. The High Commissioner for Human Rights/Centre for Human Rights, in his new institutional infrastructure, has resolved to strengthen and renew efforts to achieve the goals of the Programme of Activities for the International Decade.

A. Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities

10. During its forty-eighth session, which was held from 2 to 29 August 1996, the Subcommission considered the item relating to discrimination against indigenous peoples and recommended 2/ that the Working Group on Indigenous Populations should cooperate as a body of experts in any conceptual clarifications or analysis, which might also assist the working group established by the Commission on Human Rights to elaborate further the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. It also recommended that the Working Group should continue to address health and other important issues, including education, development, the environment and land at its future sessions.

11. The Subcommission requested the Secretary-General to invite Governments, intergovernmental organizations and indigenous and non-governmental organizations to provide information and data, in particular on matters relating to "Indigenous peoples: land and environment" and health; these would be made available as background papers at the fifteenth session of the Working Group.

12. With regard to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Indigenous Populations and the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, it recommended 3/ that the relevant United Nations departments should establish separate accounts and separate bodies for the two Funds and, if possible, transfer the financial management of the Funds from New York to Geneva.

13. With regard to the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, the Subcommission recommended 4/ that the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples should be adopted as early as possible in the International Decade. It recommended that the Centre for Human Rights should organize a workshop of indigenous journalists, in order to improve dissemination of information about the United Nations and its activities

relating to indigenous peoples and that it should organize further technical meetings relating to indigenous land rights and claims, focusing on issues such as the negotiation process and co-management regimes.

14. With regard to the permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system, the Subcommission recommended 5/ that the Centre for Human Rights should organize a second workshop on a permanent forum for indigenous peoples in early 1997. It recommended that the permanent forum should be established in the early part of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and that its mandate should include questions relating to all fields included in the programme of activities for the International Decade.

15. With regard to the issue of religious freedom of indigenous peoples, it recommended 6/ that the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on religious intolerance should explore in depth the impact that outside influences had on those communities' ability to practise their religion.

16. With regard to the protection of the heritage of indigenous people, the Subcommission recommended 7/ to the Commission on Human Rights for adoption of a draft decision recommending that Ms. Erica-Irene A. Daes be entrusted with a continuing mandate to exchange information with all parts of the United Nations system involved in activities concerned with the heritage of indigenous people, with the purpose of facilitating cooperation and coordination and of promoting the full participation of indigenous people in those efforts.

17. With regard to a study on indigenous land rights, the Subcommission recommended 8/ to the Commission on Human Rights for adoption a draft decision appointing Ms. Erica-Irene Daes as Special Rapporteur to conduct a comprehensive study on indigenous land rights and requesting the Special Rapporteur to submit a preliminary report to the Working Group on Indigenous Populations at its fifteenth session and to the Subcommission at its forty-ninth session. It also recommended that the Economic and Social Council should approve and endorse that appointment.

B. Working Group on Indigenous Populations

18. The purpose of the meetings of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations is to review developments pertaining to the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous populations, and to develop new standards in that area. Its most notable achievements include preparing the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, its support for the observance of the International Year of the World's Indigenous People, and establishing the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

19. The Working Group on Indigenous Populations, 9/ at its fourteenth session held from 29 July to 2 August 1996, considered the evolution of standards concerning the rights of indigenous peoples and the sub-item on "the concept of indigenous peoples". This sub-item will be further discussed at the fifteenth session of the Working Group.

20. A sub-item on health and indigenous peoples was also considered, and it was decided to recommend that the Subcommission should request the Centre for Human Rights to organize, together with the World Health Organization (WHO), meetings within the framework of the Decade, at regional and international levels, in which Government health experts, indigenous health experts and others involved in that field would develop practical projects and programmes.

21. The Working Group expressed concern about the Human Genome Diversity Programme, particularly about the lack of information made available to indigenous peoples targeted by it. It believed that the Programme should be halted until all the indigenous peoples affected by it were fully informed, and that it should be left to the people or communities to freely decide whether or not to collaborate in the Programme, and that their decision should be respected.

22. The Working Group considered that the land and health of indigenous peoples were closely related issues. It examined reports from various Governments and indigenous organizations giving details of their experience in efforts to improve the health of these peoples. It was decided to examine this item further at the following session of the Working Group.

23. It was agreed that a review of the question of "Indigenous peoples: land and environment" should be included in the agenda of the fifteenth session of the Working Group.

24. The Working Group considered that the permanent forum should be established at the highest possible level within the United Nations system, and that it should not be a replacement for the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. It expressed its appreciation to the Government of Chile for its offer to host the second workshop on the possible establishment of the proposed forum; the workshop is to be held at the beginning of 1997.

25. The Working Group called on Governments and specialized agencies of the United Nations to cooperate closely with indigenous peoples in order to reach agreements which would ensure that the objectives of the Decade were achieved.

26. Voluntary Fund for the International Decade. The Working Group felt it was necessary to call on Governments and private bodies to be more generous in their contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade, so that the basic objectives of the Decade could be achieved.

27. It recommended that the General Assembly should adopt the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples, to allow it to continue its work on one of the main objectives of the Decade, namely, the evolution of international standards to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples.

28. It agreed to invite Governments, intergovernmental bodies, indigenous communities and associations, non-governmental organizations and bodies within the United Nations system to submit comments on the concept of indigenous peoples, and also on the issues which it had agreed to discuss at the fifteenth session.

29. The Working Group decided to recommend that the Subcommission should undertake a wide-ranging study on the recognition of indigenous land rights, and to appoint a special rapporteur on the subject.

II. THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE DECADE

30. In its resolution 50/157, the General Assembly adopted the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. In the outline of its objectives, great importance is attached to the role of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education.

31. It establishes education as being of vital importance in the solution of the problems facing indigenous peoples, and stresses the need to promote and protect the human rights of indigenous peoples.

32. It recommends that a permanent forum for indigenous people should be set up within the United Nations system, and that the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples should be adopted.

33. It also states that the objectives of the Decade should be assessed by quantifiable outcomes that will improve the lives of indigenous peoples and that can be evaluated halfway through the Decade and at its end.

Activities to be undertaken by the major actors

34. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 48/163, 49/214 and 50/157 concerning the Decade, recommends that the United Nations system, Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and other interested parties should contribute to the activities and objectives of the Decade together with the indigenous peoples.

1. United Nations observances

(a) International Day of the World's Indigenous People

35. Ceremonies in observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People were held, for the second time, on 9 August 1996 at United Nations Headquarters in New York and at the United Nations Office at Geneva, in which representatives of indigenous peoples, Governments and non-governmental organizations took part. Relevant aspects of human rights were examined, with attention focused on the right to health of indigenous peoples.

36. Participants in the ceremony in New York included representatives of the American Indian Community House (United States of America) and the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador (Ecuador) and one representative of the Mosiro Masai people (Kenya).

37. In his message, the Secretary-General pointed out that the International Decade promotes concrete action in such vital areas as human rights, protection of the environment and access to health and education - areas in which indigenous people must be actively involved; and also referred to the efforts the United Nations system can make to enhance international cooperation and understanding on issues of central concern to the world's indigenous people. He called on the international community to redouble its efforts in addressing the legitimate concerns and demands of indigenous people.

38. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, in a message delivered in New York on the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, spoke of the need to set standards for the promotion and protection of indigenous people's rights and the desirability of studying fundamental aspects of their lives. He indicated that those peoples must be given greater access to decision-making processes at both national and international levels. He stressed the urgent need for the adoption of legal instruments to safeguard indigenous people's rights over their traditional territories, and for the immediate implementation of those instruments, as the only way of ensuring the survival of those peoples.

39. The ceremony at United Nations Headquarters in New York included the convening of a panel made up of representatives of the New York Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), WHO and UNESCO, as well as three indigenous health experts - the Director of Health Services of the American Indian Community House, a member of the Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas of Ecuador, and a representative of the Masai people of Kenya. The panel considered the theme of indigenous people and health, and it was decided that four basic aspects of the issue should be focused on and analysed: statistics, information and education, medicinal plants and nutrition.

40. Commemoration held at the United Nations Office at Geneva. On the occasion of the observance of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, the proceedings began with a statement by the Chairperson of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, who spoke of indigenous people's relationship with nature and expressed her confidence in justice. The event was attended by delegates of WHO and indigenous representatives of the Aymara people of Bolivia, the Maori people of New Zealand and the United States Indian Law Resource Center.

41. The ceremonies at the United Nations Office at Geneva included a round table attended by representatives of WHO, the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, representing the Centre for Human Rights, two delegates of the World Council of Churches, one of them representing the Aymara people of Bolivia and the other the Maori people of New Zealand, and one delegate of the United States Indian Law Resource Center.

42. The round table dealt with the topic of indigenous people and health. The discussion focused on the importance of spirituality as a component of indigenous people's health; on the safeguarding of land rights and territorial rights as a factor fundamental to their health; and on justice and respect for

the indigenous world-view in relation to health. The representatives of WHO gave details of health programmes and their influence on indigenous people. It was recommended that the question of indigenous people and health should be considered in greater depth; and that States and agencies specializing in health matters, and indigenous people themselves, must be actively involved in that area.

(b) Official observance of the Decade at international conferences

43. The Decade has been observed as part of the proceedings of various international conferences concerned with its objectives and themes. Such conferences include the World Summit for Social Development, 10/ held in Copenhagen in March 1995, which stated that it recognized and supported indigenous people in their pursuit of economic and social development, with full respect for their identity, traditions, forms of social organization and cultural values.

44. The Fourth World Conference on Women, 11/ held in Beijing in September 1995, in its Declaration and Platform for Action, called for an intensification of efforts to ensure equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls who face multiple barriers to their empowerment and advancement because of various factors, such as being indigenous people.

45. The International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in September 1994, 12/ referred in its Programme of Action to the importance of incorporating the perspectives and needs of indigenous communities into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the population, development and environment programmes that affect them; ensuring that indigenous people are provided with the population and development services that they consider appropriate from the social, cultural and ecological standpoints; and studying the social and economic factors that place indigenous people at a disadvantage.

46. The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, included a round table in which indigenous representatives took part; the important issue of indigenous human settlements was discussed in plenary and the principles of sustainable development were reasserted. The item was included in the Global Plan of Action of the Conference.

2. Activities of the Coordinator and the Centre for Human Rights

(a) Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

47. The Voluntary Fund for the Decade was set up pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 48/163 and 49/214, with the purpose of financing projects and programmes during the Decade and strengthening international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people.

48. The Voluntary Fund is administered by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations. As of 12 September 1996, the Fund's available resources stood at US$ 274,772 (see annex I).

49. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/157, an Advisory Group was established for the Voluntary Fund for the Decade, 13/ which, at its first meeting, decided to draw up guidelines and a questionnaire (see annexes II and III) to submit requests for financial support to the Fund and to consider, in the near future, the analysis and adoption of projects put forward by and on behalf of indigenous people.

50. At its first meeting the Advisory Group recommended to the Coordinator for the Decade that, within available resources, priority should be given to the convening of a second international workshop on the possible establishment of a permanent forum for indigenous people, and to developing a project for scholarships for indigenous people wishing to acquire experience in the United Nations system - activities recommended by General Assembly resolution 50/157.

51. The Advisory Group recommended sponsoring, in conjunction with UNESCO, the cross-border human rights training programme for indigenous representatives and official delegates of Peru and Ecuador; providing technical support for an information workshop on the draft declaration on the rights of the indigenous people of the Pacific and Asia region, proposed by the Government of Fiji; and providing assistance for the indigenous project prepared by the East Africa Regional Information Office, with its headquarters in Kenya.

52. The Advisory Group will hold its 2nd meeting in the first quarter of 1997, to consider the analysis of projects put forward by and on behalf of indigenous people and to make recommendations thereon.

(b) Fellowship programme

53. In 1997, the United Nations Office at Geneva will implement a pilot programme of short-term fellowships for indigenous peoples. The programme will include training and practical work on human rights and on the United Nations system. It will be carried out in conjunction with organizations of indigenous peoples and non-governmental organizations. Fellowships will be granted to representatives of three different regions, selected by the Advisory Group to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade, from applications received before 15 November 1996.

54. In February 1996, a UNESCO delegation met in Geneva with the High Commissioner for Human Rights and officials of the Centre for Human Rights to consider what activities could be carried out jointly, within the framework of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People. Priority was given to the cross-border human rights training programme for the indigenous peoples of Peru and Ecuador, which will begin shortly, with the collaboration of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade.

(c) Expert Seminar on Practical Experiences Regarding Indigenous Land Rights and Claims

55. The seminar took place in Whitehorse, Canada, in March 1996, at the invitation of the Government of Canada and the Centre for Human Rights, in response to the proposal in General Assembly resolution 49/214. Independent, government and indigenous peoples' experts from various parts of the world took part in the seminar and put forward proposals for the protection and development of the lands and territories of indigenous peoples. A series of conclusions and recommendations 14/ were submitted to Governments, indigenous peoples and their organizations, and to intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

(d) Workshop for Indigenous Peoples of the Pacific, on the United Nations Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

56. The workshop took place in Suva, Fiji, from 2 to 4 September 1996. It was organized by the Government of Fiji and supported by UNDP, the European Union, the American Friends Service Committee, and the Centre for Human Rights.

57. The Government of Fiji requested support from the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade for the participation of three resource-persons for the workshop: the Chairperson-Rapporteur of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the Special Rapporteur of the Subcommission and member of the Working Group, and the Secretary of the Working Group on the draft declaration. On the recommendation of the Advisory Group of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade, the Coordinator decided to support the workshop.

58. Participants included 40 representatives of indigenous organizations from Australia, French Polynesia, Hawaii, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa, as well as representatives of the Government of Fiji, a representative of UNDP and observers from the Australian and New Zealand Embassies.

59. Conclusions and follow-up. The indigenous peoples of the South Pacific islands were not well informed about United Nations activities relating to the rights of indigenous peoples nor about human rights in general. Interest was expressed, not only in the draft declaration, but also in other initiatives, such as the International Decade and the proposal to establish a permanent forum. The workshop served as a precedent for arousing greater interest in the region in the work of the Centre for Human Rights and it is hoped that there will be increased participation by the indigenous peoples of this region in human rights meetings. The Centre for Human Rights will send all participants more information on the two working groups and on the existing Voluntary Funds.

3. Operational activities of the United Nations system

60. In resolution 50/157 and based on the objectives set forth therein the General Assembly recommends that the United Nations system should establish coordination centres for indigenous issues, adopt programmes for the Decade, develop training materials for indigenous peoples on human rights, and hold consultations on the Decade with all interested parties.

Inter-Agency Consultation on Indigenous Peoples

61. The Centre for Human Rights called a meeting of United Nations agencies on 26 July 1996, in order to consult them regarding their activities in relation to indigenous peoples. The following information was provided.

62. UNESCO has a project in Guatemala, called Maya World, in the areas of education, science and human rights, stressing cultural integrity and biological diversity. As part of the activities being carried out in the context of the World Decade for Cultural Development UNESCO is working to enhance recognition of indigenous literature and to promote traditional languages.

63. WHO has established a focal point on indigenous peoples to deal with all matters related to indigenous programmes. On the occasion of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous Peoples the WHO Assembly adopted resolution WHA49.26 and exhorted member States to designate focal points on issues relating to health and indigenous peoples.

64. ILO deals with indigenous matters under Conventions Nos. 107 and 169 concerning human rights and offers technical assistance aimed at the implementation and ratification of the two conventions. It worked with the Ministry of Nationalities of the Russian Federation to organize a meeting in September 1995, the purpose of which was to gather international technical assistance for the indigenous peoples of that country and to discuss ratification of Convention No. 169 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples. There is also a project to promote the rights of indigenous and tribal peoples according to norms established by the ILO.

65. ILO is carrying out technical assistance programmes in Bolivia, Guatemala and the Philippines and some training programmes on indigenous issues in collaboration with intergovernmental organizations. It is carrying out an interregional programme to support self-reliance of indigenous and tribal communities through cooperatives and other self-help organizations (INDISCO). This programme has been operating since 1993, with 17 pilot projects in the Philippines, India and Central America.

66. UNDP is considering activities for indigenous peoples under two headings: to develop a new information policy so as to promote the extensive public dissemination of documents, and to establish a focal point for indigenous peoples within the Programme.

67. The World Bank, through the Department for Asia and Latin America, is implementing projects which give special consideration to indigenous peoples. There is a trend to take into account the land rights and intellectual property rights of indigenous peoples.

68. The United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA) is determining issues of identity, discrimination, culture and right to land; these issues are supported by Convention No. 169. It is also involved in the setting up of technical cooperation programmes outlined in the peace agreements.

69. The purpose of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, an intergovernmental organization, established by the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants, is to promote intellectual property rights. It recognizes that there is a close relationship between intellectual property rights and plant conservation, and the rights of indigenous peoples to their lands and to their survival.

70. The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, stresses the importance of the Convention's framework in relation to respect for indigenous innovations and practices and for the way of life of traditional local communities, an issue which it is trying to address.

4. Activities of regional organizations

71. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States (OAS) is preparing an Inter-American Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, a draft of which was adopted by the Commission in September 1995. Over an extended period ending on 30 November 1996, the Commission is holding consultations with governments and organizations of indigenous people, with a view to revising the draft declaration and later submitting it to the OAS General Assembly for consideration in 1997.

72. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights reports that 15 organizations of indigenous people of the Americas have examined the draft declaration. It was discussed at the World Meeting of Indigenous People, held in Peru in October 1995, a Canadian Bar Association seminar, held at Ottawa in October 1995, an international meeting on the draft inter-American declaration held in Canada in February 1996, organized by the Fundación Canadiense para América Latina y el Caribe (FOCAL), and in other forums.

73. Other governmental and non-governmental organizations, such as the Directorate of Indigenous Affairs in the Venezuelan Ministry of Education, the Organización Nacional Indígena Salvadoreña, the Asociación Kuna Napguana de Panamá, the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec and the Centros Culturales Mapuche de Cañete Asociación Gremial, have provided comments on the draft declaration to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights.

74. The Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) has been concerned with the health of indigenous people since 1992. In its 1995 work plan, PAHO proposed to give priority to the development of programmes for indigenous people, including a traditional medicine programme and a subregional communication and coordination programme.

5. Activities of Member States

75. Mention should be made of the ILO Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples in Independent Countries (No. 169), which has now been ratified by 10 countries: Bolivia, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Guatemala, Honduras, Paraguay, Peru, Mexico and Norway.

76. Bolivia and Peru are among the Member States which have reported the establishment of National Committees for the Decade. Such actions are among the ways in which countries have responded to the resolutions on the Decade; Member States are urged to emulate that response by forming more national committees for the Decade.

77. The Government of Bolivia reports that fundamental constitutional and educational reforms have been carried out which grant specific rights to indigenous people. In 1996 it held the First Multi-ethnic Conference of Bolivian Women with a view to analysing issues affecting women from the standpoint of gender and culture.

78. The Canadian Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development announced that the Government of Canada recognizes and observes 9 August as the International Day of the World's Indigenous People, emphasizing, in particular, the importance of trade and economic development for Canada's indigenous people. The Government notes that enterprises and the participation of indigenous people in international trade are growing through worldwide bilateral initiatives. On the International Day, the Government recognizes that an objective of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People is to strengthen international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people.

79. The Government of Canada has carried out activities in connection with the Decade. It declared 21 June, the date of the summer solstice, which is of great spiritual importance to Canada's indigenous people, as the national day of indigenous people. It participates in the Working Group on Indigenous Populations of the Commission on Human Rights (Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities) and is a member of the open-ended inter-sessional Working Group of the Commission which is elaborating a draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people.

80. The Arctic Council, of which Canada is a member, includes the Arctic countries and circumpolar organizations, such as the Inuit Circumpolar Conference, the Saami Council and the Association of Indigenous Minorities of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, which represent the majority of indigenous people of the Arctic region. The Council is working on two main projects: an environmental protection strategy and a sustainable development strategy for the Arctic region. An objective of the Canada-Mexico Declaration, signed in June 1996, is the development of trade between indigenous people of the two countries.

81. In March 1996 the Government of the Philippines held the Global Indigenous and Youth Cultural Olympics/Summit for Peace and Sustainable Development with the theme "Partnership in action with youth for peace and sustainable development". The Summit adopted the Manila Declaration, which takes into account the aspirations, objectives and programmes of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and the outcome of recent world conferences, keeping in mind the need to ensure humane cultural survival while pursuing people-oriented development. The Declaration has three sections; the first deals with indigenous people, the second with indigenous youth and the third with a new partnership with indigenous people.

82. The main themes of the Summit were: cultural identity and the arts; land and culture; human rights and responsibilities; education and health; participation; and peace and sustainable development.

6. Activities of organizations of indigenous people

83. Representatives of organizations of indigenous people of the western hemisphere, including, inter alia, Organización Nacional Indígena de Colombia, Coordinadora de Nacionalidades Indígenas del Ecuador, Asociación Interétnica de Desarrollo de la Selva Peruana, Consejo de Todas las Tierras Mapuche Wali Mapuche de Chile, Región Autónoma del Atlántico Norte de Nicaragua, La Nación Kuna de Panamá, Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec, Centro de Información Indígena de Sur América and SAIIC, met at Copenhagen from 5 to 10 August 1996, with a view to holding a dialogue, exchanging experience regarding current problems in their communities and considering future actions to be taken to solve those problems.

84. The following was discussed at the meeting: territorial rights, autonomy and self-determination; biodiversity and intellectual property; the indigenous woman; indigenous health and medicine; communication; religion and spirituality, education and culture; international agreements; international cooperation and development for indigenous people.

85. The conclusions and resolutions of the meeting expressed the view that the right to self-identification was an inalienable right of indigenous people and all other people. Discussions centred on the importance of organized participation in the United Nations, OAS and the European Union in order to broaden opportunities for consultation through unified approaches to the development of international legal instruments for indigenous people. The meeting culminated in the adoption of the Copenhagen Declaration.

7. Activities of non-governmental organizations and other interested groups, including education establishments, the media and business

Parlamento Indígena de América

86. At its Tenth Meeting held on 28 and 29 March 1996 in Quito, Ecuador, with the participation of indigenous representatives from Bolivia, Ecuador, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico and Nicaragua, the Parlamento Indígena de América approved a draft agreement with UNESCO on indigenous languages and intellectual property of indigenous people on the American continent and an agreement between PAHO and WHO concerning the health of indigenous people.

87. At that meeting, taking into account, inter alia, that the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People offers an ideal opportunity for promoting actions in support of the overall development of indigenous people, the Quito Declaration was adopted.

88. The European Parliament Intergroup for Indigenous People is an informal group of members of the European Parliament that was established to discuss issues affecting indigenous people. The European Parliament raises such issues in the European Union. Two decisions have been adopted which recognize the importance of the participation of indigenous people in decisions on matters which affect them. The Council of Europe has been requested to adopt a common position in the Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights with regard to the adoption of the draft declaration on the rights of indigenous people in the context of the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

89. In Chile, the Instituto de Estudios Indígenas de la Universidad de la Frontera has established a centre for the preservation of indigenous culture, with the aim of increasing the visibility of the indigenous people of Chile.

90. In Spain, the independent intellectuals' debating forum of the Fundación de Pueblos Indígenas, meeting in Madrid on 12 July 1996, decided, inter alia, to urge similar writers' organizations throughout the world, especially those in countries members of the European Union, to recognize explicitly the collective intellectual property rights of indigenous people.

91. The International Alliance of the Indigenous Tribal Peoples of the Tropical Forests, which represents organizations of indigenous people in 30 countries, met in Geneva on 26 July 1996, in order to draw up a calendar of international meetings to be held during 1996-1997 on topics related to indigenous people and to increase the participation of indigenous people in such meetings.

92. The NGO Committee for the Decade, in which organizations of the world's indigenous people participate, meets once a month in New York to discuss matters relating to the Decade.

93. The World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), which has institutional affiliates in over 50 countries, has held meetings with indigenous and rural communities on such topics as the management of protected areas and conservation of natural resources.

III. FINAL COMMENTS

94. The Programme of Activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People is very comprehensive, and indispensable for resolving the many problems facing indigenous people. Despite all that has been done and all the headway made in this last year, much remains to be accomplished, and hence all those involved are urged to make a greater effort to advance the goals of the Decade.

95. The main objective of the Decade, and the focus of the work being done, is the strengthening of international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, health, culture and education. It is recommended that Governments, regional organizations, organizations of indigenous people, government bodies, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties should establish coordination mechanisms for the solution of such problems.

96. It is recommended that national committees or similar mechanisms should be established at various levels, with full indigenous participation, and that regional, national and local focal points should also be established to help implement plans of action.

97. It is recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should adopt the Subcommission's draft resolution appointing Ms. Erica-Irene Daes as Special Rapporteur to conduct a comprehensive study on indigenous land rights.

98. Governments, private organizations, indigenous organizations and individuals are to be commended for their collaboration and the contributions they have made to the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade. Yet although progress has been made in achieving the goals of the Decade, the existing budgetary resources do not permit full realization of all the planned activities; and it is therefore imperative for Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, financial institutions and other private bodies to give more generously to the Fund.

99. It is recommended that the programme of fellowships offered by the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and certain specialized agencies to train indigenous people wishing to gain experience relevant to indigenous issues should be expanded; and also that community-based training and educational programmes on human rights and indigenous rights should be set up, and training and technical assistance courses in project design and management should be developed.

100. It is recommended that Governments and indigenous and other organizations should promote a knowledge and appreciation of the cultures of indigenous people among teachers, public health workers and all who work or have dealings with indigenous communities; and that teaching material should be prepared, in indigenous languages when possible, reflecting aspects of the culture under consideration.

101. It would be desirable for the Centre for Human Rights to organize a workshop for indigenous journalists in order to improve dissemination of information about the United Nations and its activities relating to indigenous peoples; and to organize further technical meetings on questions relating to indigenous land rights and claims.

102. It is recommended that the Coordinator of the Decade, with the help of Governments, regional organizations, Member States, organizations of indigenous people, non-governmental organizations and other interested parties, should organize a communications network guaranteeing the prompt distribution of information about the Decade to those concerned.

103. It is recognized that progress has been made in realizing the objective of the Decade that consists in implementing the recommendations pertaining to indigenous people by all high-level international conferences, and it is suggested that such conferences should give more time to the discussion of matters relating to the objectives of the Decade.

104. A permanent forum for indigenous people in the United Nations system would provide them with an arena for raising and discussing issues of interest to them, and its main purpose would be to promote development, peace and prosperity, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. The hope is that it will be possible to establish it early in the Decade; accordingly, it is recommended that the Centre for Human Rights should organize a second workshop on a permanent forum in early 1997, as planned; and the offer by the Government of Chile to host the second workshop is welcomed.

105. With regard to the adoption of the draft United Nations declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples and the further development of international standards as well as national legislation for the protection and promotion of the human rights of indigenous people, including effective means of monitoring and guaranteeing those rights, it would be of great benefit to indigenous people if its adoption coincided with the observance of the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in 1998. The relevant Working Group of the Commission on Human Rights is therefore encouraged to continue its consideration and elaboration of the draft declaration during its session from 21 October to 1 November 1996.

106. Considering that the objectives of the Decade should be assessed by quantifiable outcomes that will improve the lives of indigenous people and that can be evaluated halfway through the Decade and at its end, a review of the projects supported by the Voluntary Fund is recommended, for an analysis of the results of the planned activities will furnish the information needed to assess the achievement of the objectives of the Decade. Accordingly, it is further recommended that a report should be prepared reviewing the activities carried out under the programme of activities for the Decade during the period 1994-1996, which shall be included as a separate item in the agenda for the fifteenth session of the Working Group on Indigenous Populations.

Notes

1/ A/49/444.

2/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.31.

3/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.32.

4/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.33.

5/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.34.

6/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.39.

7/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.51.

8/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.52.

9/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/1996/L.21.

10/ A/CONF.166/9.

11/ A/CONF.177/20.17.

12/ A/CONF.171/13/Rev.1.

13/ E/CN.4/AC.4/1996/4.

14/ E/CN.4/Sub.2/AC.4/1996/6.

15/ Press release 12/96 of the Organization of American States.

ANNEX I

Voluntary Fund for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People - estimated income as at 12 September 1996 a/

Donor	Date	Amount in United States dollars	Remarks
Greece	18 May 1995	3 000	
	9 May 1996	3 000	
Kuwait	9 August 1994	10 000	
New Zealand	16 July 1996	6 779	New York receipt
Norway	28 December 1994	72 881	
Switzerland	19 January 1995	18 333	SwF 24 200
Switzerland	23 January 1996	37 931	SwF 44 000
Canada	23 January 1996	11 094	Can$ 15 000
Japan	30 April 1996	50 000	New York receipt
Australia	14 May 1996	31 920	
The Relaxation Company	29 February 1995	2 333	
	25 October 1995	761	
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission	3 November 1994	5 344	
	14 July 1995	5 660	
	15 May 1996	7 975	
Intuition Music. Inc.	28 June 1995	25	
	17 August 1995	25	
	21 September 1995	25	
	4 October 1995	50	
	1 March 1996	25	
	14 March 1996	25	
	15 March 1996	25	
	6 May 1996	50	
	15 May 1996	50	
	26 July 1996	50	
	22 August 1996	50	
E. Stamatopoulou	5 January 1996	800	
Verlagsgesellschaft	25 April 1995	4 541	
Total		274 752	

a/ Based on information available at the Legislation and Prevention of Discrimination Branch of the United Nations Centre for Human Rights.

ANNEX II

International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

First meeting of the Advisory Group of the Voluntary Fund for the International Decade

Geneva, 29 April-1 May 1996

Guidelines

Objectives of the Voluntary Fund

- to support the programme of activities adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 50/157

- to provide assistance to projects and programmes advancing the goal of the International Decade: international cooperation for the solution of problems faced by indigenous people in such areas as human rights, the environment, development, education, culture and health

Who can apply

- indigenous peoples, communities and organizations, non-governmental organizations and academic and other similar institutions; organizations should be non-profit-making

- national committees for the Decade

- intergovernmental organizations and Governments with proposals for joint or "partnership" projects in cooperation with indigenous peoples

Main project areas

- the programme of activities and objectives of the Decade as well as the recommendations of the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action as they relate to indigenous people

- indigenous organizational structures and procedures and their strengthening through education, training and institution- and capacity-building, bearing in mind the need to respect their relevant traditions

- education and training in human and indigenous rights

- information about indigenous peoples and the International Decade

- communications and exchanges between the United Nations system and indigenous peoples and between indigenous peoples

- fund-raising initiatives in furtherance of the objectives of the Decade

Criteria for selection

- projects should be of direct benefit to indigenous people in all parts of the world

- projects should be prepared by or in full consultation with indigenous people

- projects will be considered taking into account gender balance

- particular consideration will be given to projects from underdeveloped areas in different regions

- projects will be approved in relevant areas including in particular those relating to the promotion, protection and implementation of human and indigenous rights

ANNEX III

Questionnaire for applicants to the Voluntary Fund

1. Please give the project title.

2. Describe the main objective(s) of the project. Please also indicate how the project relates to one of the six main projects areas.

3. Provide a summary of the project, including information about how it will be implemented.

4. What is the executing organization? Please provide information about the organization, including information about membership, past activities and projects as well as relevant financial details. Provide information about any partner organizations.

5. What are the expected benefits for indigenous people? What is the expected follow-up to the project?

6. What is the duration of the project, including information about each phase of the project?

7. What are the total costs of the project, including breakdown of proposed expenditures? What is the contribution requested from the Voluntary Fund? What are the other sources of funding? How will the accounting of the project be managed?

8. How will the project be evaluated? Are the results quantifiable?

Projects should be sent to the Secretariat before 15 March each year.

Applications for the Voluntary Fund will be considered annually in April.

Contributions from the Voluntary Fund will not exceed US$ 50,000.